



Senator Ted W. Lieu

28th Senate District

Senate Bill 57

GPS Enforcement on Sex Offenders

Fact Sheet

Purpose:

Thousands of paroled child molesters, rapists and other high-risk sex offenders are removing or disarming their electronic global positioning system monitoring devices at an alarming increasing rate. These sex offenders are then committing new crimes, including sexual battery, kidnapping and attempted manslaughter.

These documented increases jeopardize the entire GPS monitoring system and put the program at risk of failure if thousands of dangerous parolees aren't kept from disabling their tracking devices. GPS supervision is not only an important tool used to monitor sex offenders; it has also been shown to reduce recidivism, reduce crime and save taxpayer dollars, according to a study funded by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Senate Bill 57 seeks to deter parolees from cutting off their GPS bracelets and help keep dangerous convicts off the streets.

Background:

GPS monitoring devices are programmed to record sex offenders' movements and are intended to deter them from committing crimes. These devices are attached by rubber ankle straps embedded with fiber-optic cables that transmit signals. These straps are easily cut off, however, and while this triggers an alarm that notifies parole agents, the parolee is gone.

A February 2013 series of investigative stories by the *Los Angeles Times* found that a disturbing number of parolees monitored by GPS ankle-mounted bracelets are cutting them off and escaping effective punishment. These convicted sex

offenders parolees had discovered they can disable their bracelets with little consequences.

Why?

Because while removing the monitor is a parole violation – it does not automatically send the convict back to state prison. Instead, if apprehended, they are returned to county jails that often can't book these sex offenders because there's no room to hold them.

Specifically, more than 3,400 arrest warrants for GPS removal or tampering have been issued between October 2011 and early 2012. During that 15-month span, an average of more than 225 parolees per month were removing or disabling their GPS tracking devices. Warrants also increased 28 percent in 2012 compared to the year before. Most of the warrants were for dangerous sex offenders.

A study by the National Institute of Justice found that for sex offenders who were not monitored by GPS, "the hazard ratio of a sex-related violation is nearly three times as great" as for sex offenders who had GPS supervision. Research shows that when a sex offender is not being monitored by a GPS device, the offender's chances of committing a new sex crime increase threefold.

Deficiency in Current law:

Prior to the 2011 public safety realignment, sex offenders and other parolees who breach parole were returned to state prison for up to a year. However, realignment moved parole violators from state prison to county jails to be held for not longer than 180 days.



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By changing where these parole violators are housed, an unintended consequence was created as it relates to GPS monitoring. Where previously these sex offenders would return to state prison, they now are being freed within days or even hours because of crowded county jails.

This Bill:

Specifically, SB 57 would:

- Require a sex offender GPS absconder to serve the entire 180 days of a parole revocation in county jail.
- For the second and subsequent time the sex offender parolee will serve 365 days of a parole revocation in county jail.

Following the time being served on this new felony, this sex offender will be released again on parole as a sex offender and once again monitored by GPS.

Support:

AFSCME
Association for Los Angeles Deputy Sheriffs
CA District Attorneys Association
CA Narcotics Officers Association
CA Police Chiefs Association
City of Los Angeles
County of Los Angeles
Crime Victims United
Golden State Bail Agents Association
Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
Los Angeles Police Protective League
LA County Probation Officers Union
PORAC
Riverside Sheriff's Association

Opposition:

American Civil Liberties Union of CA
California Attorneys for Criminal Justice
California Public Defenders Association
Legal Services for Prisoners with Children
Taxpayers for Improving Public Safety

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